

Color Variations

This month we are going to focus on the color variations you may see between our products and our catalog. We've used a Pantone color guide to match as closely as possible to our products so you get the colors that you want. We want to make sure you understand that we try and match our color samples in our catalog as close to the actual product as possible. However, it is physically impossible for the printing press to exactly reproduce colors as we see them on our monitors or even by holding our products up to the color and trying to match it and here's why...

Commercial printers use CMYK ink which stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black and when combined they create black. Printers use CMYK instead of RGB, and therefore the results produced are a different range of color, this includes catalogs, brochures, and anything being printed with 4 color process printing. Also, some products such as our trim have a shine or an anodized finish to them making color matching very difficult. Other products such as vinyl or acrylic can be translucent (allowing light through) therefore making it difficult to represent the color correctly when printed.

Four color process printing is a system where a color image is separated into 4 different color values (called a color separation) by the use of filters and screens. The result is a color separation of 4 images that when transferred to printing plates and sequentially printed on a printing press with the colored inks cyan (blue), magenta (red), yellow and black (the k in myk), reproduces the original color image. Most of the entire spectrum or gamut of colors is reproduced with just the four process ink colors. The four color printing process is universally used in the graphic arts and commercial printing industry for the reproduction of color images and text.

You might ask "How well will my job match what I see on my monitor?"

Well, if you're picking a color from our [virtual catalog](#) you should be aware that the colors you see on screen will most likely not match the colors of the product. Most people would be surprised at how well their job does match what they see, but because there are so many differences in monitors and calibrations and different technologies used, some printed colors may not exactly match to your specific monitor.



(RGB example)



(CMYK example)

RGB produces brighter results because when combined they create white. RGB is used mainly for television screens, digital cameras, and scanners to display colors and refers to the primary colors of light - Red, Green and Blue. Certain RGB colors that you can see on your monitor or camera (in particular, bright vibrant colors) simply cannot be replicated with standard CMYK inks. These unachievable RGB colors are said to be "out of the CMYK color gamut." You are more likely to notice color shifts when you use a solid, bright color as a background or fill.

Our catalog is the best place to choose a color that best fits your sign because it has many pages of color samples for all of our different products and they focus on the colors of each type of product – from the acrylic to the raceway and we have a wide variety of colors that are great on most signs. If you're worried about a specific color turning out right we have actual samples of our products and they are supplied at no charge. Feel free to call us at 800-544-6381 or email us at signfab@signfab.com with any questions you may have.